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SUNDAY, DECEMBER 16, 1906.

No American Dreadnought.

A healthy sentiment appears to be spreading in Congress against the plan of our naval enthusiasts to build the biggest battleship in the world. We can well afford to let the international rivalry over the construction of Dreadnoughts run its course under other circumstances and at the expense of other governments.

We agree with our great apostle of peace, the winner of the Nobel prize, that the navy should be maintained at its present strength, and that the old and obsolete ships should be replaced by new and good ones. But we regretfully part company with him on his "well-settled" program of providing for the building of at least one first-class battleship each year of at least one first-class battleship equal in size and speed to any that any nation is at the same time building. Such a programme would fill the navy with a heterogeneous assortment of battleships, differing in size, speed, and armament, as from year to year the competition in naval architecture grew fiercer and more foolish.

We hope it is true that the President is willing to forego this programme and to accept an addition to the navy of one battleship or two of the type lately built as more in accord with a sound policy of naval expansion. That would save us from the international scramble for the biggest battleship, and preserve the strength and homogeneity of the fleet.

God be, "thru," take care of yourself.

Cowardice in Congress.

Unquestionably, cowardice was the principal factor in determining the votes of the majority of the House members who killed the item in the appropriation bill increasing the salary of the national lawmakers from \$5,000 to \$7,500. Some of those who made speeches against the proposition placed their opposition on high ground, notably Mr. Boutwell, of Illinois; but the truth of the declaration of Mr. Clark, of Florida, that many of those who had made up their minds to vote against it "hoped it would pass," undoubtedly described a situation that would be ludicrous but for the timidity that brought it about.

The proposed increase in the compensation of Congressmen would have added to the annual budget only a little more than a million dollars. That amount of money is a mere bagatelle in the eyes of the American people, whose government is now costing them three-quarters of a billion a year. That this stupendous tax upon their earnings is not dissatisfying to the people is demonstrated by their continuing in power year after year, the party charged with the responsibility of their government. Hence, the Democrats can not hope to make any political capital worth while by the virtually unanimous vote they gave in the House against the proposal to increase the compensation paid to that class of public servants whose work ought to be whether it is or not—the most valuable to the republic.

The fact that with practical unanimity both sides of the House voted to increase the salaries of the President, the Speaker, and each member of the Cabinet from their present inadequate size to the respectable figure of \$25,000 proves the case against the Representatives.

Oh, economy, what silly things are done in thy name by the American Congress! Oh, hypocrisy, thy name is "politics!"

The ship of state is moving along fairly well. Do not rock the boat.

Ambassadorial Duties.

Many and varied have been the reasons given for the retirement from Washington of Sir Mortimer Durand. It has been said, with more than a shadow of truth, that he has not been in accord with his government with regard to the interests of Canada and Newfoundland, and the British press believes that he has not been able to adapt himself to the mode and attitude of Washington's social life. Our English cousins are of the opinion that he has allowed, in Washington, British influence to be overshadowed and stifled by that of the German and French embassies.

The British, in short, have come to the belief that it would be well for them, in the matter of appointing ambassadors, to take a leaf out of our book. As the Westminster Gazette says, the United States has sent to England in unrivaled succession of distinguished, broad-gauged, thoroughly human ambassadors. None of them has been a trained diplomatist, yet all have been successful. Instead of being wrapped up in "the banalities of international negotiations," they open libraries instead of dispatch boxes, and make speeches instead of representations.

They are coming to believe, and wisely, that an ambassador, to be successful in this country, must exert himself, make his personality felt, travel about the country; make such an impression that he will be sought at public functions, mingle in public—not political—life, and, in short, so far as consistent with the dignity of his office, he should be more of "half fellow, well met" than British ambassadors to Washington have been in the past. Measured by these requirements, there is no doubt that the retiring British Ambassador falls short, and is not at all after the pattern of Lowell, Choate, and Whitwell Reid, who did so much to make the United States well and favorably understood in England.

The British also complain, without much justice, we think, that President Roosevelt's friendship for Emperor William II has somewhat obscured the luster of Britain's representative. Of course, Count Speck von Sternburg is a

personal friend of the President, but Sir Mortimer Durand can hardly be blamed for Mr. Roosevelt's personal predilections. The British themselves admit that Count Speck von Sternburg is one of the ablest opponents that British diplomacy has anywhere to encounter. But we can hardly go with the London Outlook when it declares:

"We do not believe that he (Mr. Roosevelt) could be trusted, even in a matter that did not touch American interests, to regard himself automatically on the side of England against Germany."

We have come to a point in this government where personal friendship counts for a good deal in the things that are going, but we doubt very much whether friendship can be carried to the extent that the Outlook seems to imply.

We think that the British press has, on the whole, got at the root of the difficulty in supplying the right sort of an ambassador to Washington. With the ability to be really persons grata, not only to the President and officials, but to the country generally, counts for a good deal more than cold and unsympathetic dignity.

Mr. Root declared: "Times change, and men change with them." Everybody but the standpatters.

France Again Faces a Crisis.

In a memoir of Tennyson it is related how one evening the solitary poet wandered to the house of Carlyle, in Cheyne place, and the twin, scant of speech, sat silent in the library for a long time. Tennyson, at last, flung open the window and leaned out, long, puffing at his strong pipe, and occupied with his own thoughts. Suddenly he turned about, knocked out the ashtray and exclaimed: "By the living God, but France is in a loathsome state; and so betook himself home."

Some equally strong and terse characterization might be applied to the France of the present day; republican France, with its striking evidences of injustice; its confiscation of church property which is little short of robbery; its bitter intolerance against the clergy, and its agonized statesmen trying with vaunting boast that they have driven Christ from the army and navy, from the asylum, the schools, and now must hunt Him out of the state altogether.

The trouble in France to-day is much more than a mere question of the separation of church and state. A movement toward such separation has been going on for years all over the world, and even conservative England has been in the throes of argument over the matter ever since Gladstone's prime, and sooner or later has got to face the subject boldly.

In America, fortunately, our forefathers—most of whom had suffered through religious intolerance—laid the foundations of our government so firmly, and clearly to be understood, that religions have taken their place among us solely on their merits, and every man is guaranteed his right to worship in his own way.

But mercurial France seems quite unable to face any national problem without that frenzied reaction which leads to the subversion of all law and order, which leads to injustice and cruelty. It is bad enough for France to have, latent in her body, the germs of a revival of the Orleans pretensions; it is infinitely worse when her purely political differences become entangled by or identified with her religious troubles.

If Mr. Roosevelt wants to make a real hit with Congress, he will send in a message recommending an increase of Congressional salaries, or, better still, issue an Executive order raising them.

"Fraud Order" for Santa Claus.

We confess to some small degree of surprise on learning that a "fraud order" has been issued by the Post-office Department against highly respectable and happy old citizen, Santa Claus. Yet such is actually the case. All mail directed to him must go, without further ado, straight to the dead-letter office.

We never expected to see Santa come to this! Perhaps, in a pious, happy, and kindly way, the old fellow is something of a fraud, but his fraudulent practices have brought only happiness and good cheer into this world. To be officially stamped as bogus is something that Santa Claus did not deserve. His broad and heretofore untarnished escutcheon merited no such besmirching. Were it not for the fact that tots and toddlers are so forgiving and forgetful, we have no doubt that in after years the high and mighty authorities who have forced indignity upon this frail old man would hear the voice of the people thundering in their ears as never before. But, alas, as childish hearts grow in wisdom, we fear they are prone to overlook and excuse such things.

The Herald's juvenile constituency should treat the government's order with the contempt it deserves, and write to Santa Claus as much as they please. What does a post-office order amount to between such friends, anyway? The Post-office Department cannot outlaw Santa Claus with all the mammas and the papas in the land backing him up. He will get most of the letters all right.

For the people in the Post-office Department who are primarily responsible for this highly reprehensible act we have more pity than scorn. We might go so far as to say we admire their courage, even though we do minimize their judgment. Santa Claus has been carrying that pack and scaling that same kind of sunshine too many years to be disturbed by any such intervention by this strong centralized government, and he will continue to do business till the crack of doom—"fraud orders" and high-handed assaults to the contrary notwithstanding.

"When we get the pole, what will we do with land so situated?" asks a contemporary. Give it to the Oregon state men; they will probably get it, anyway.

Our Philippine Colony.

We gather from Secretary Taft's summary of conditions in the Philippines that the troubles of the archipelago are economic rather than political. The disturbances in the islands of Samar and Leyte, which threaten to delay the prospective elections for a popular assembly, grew out of an old feud between the hemp-raising mountain peoples, known as Pulajanes, and the buyers of their product in the coast towns, who are accused of depressing and monopolizing the hemp market. The feeling engendered by the sharp practices of the hemp buyers, among whom, apparently, are municipal officials, has created a feeling of resentment against constitutional authority and has led to reprisals. Both Gov. Gen. Smith and Maj. Gen. Wood think the situation in Samar and Leyte greatly improved, and Secretary Taft is hopeful that there will be no reason for postponing the elections beyond the date originally contemplated.

Depression of agriculture remains the real Philippine problem, as it has been for several years. Island revenues are abundant, the public peace is in the main well preserved, and the work of the principal industries of the people, the cultivation of sugar and tobacco, are not

flourishing. What the Philippine people really need, Mr. Taft says in effect, is a share in American prosperity, which he admits they have not had throughout the periods of American occupation. He suggests as one means to this end the establishment of an agricultural bank, modeled upon the Egyptian bank instituted by Lord Cromer. High interest rates, Mr. Taft says, are the greatest burden upon Philippine agriculture, a burden which could be lifted by an agricultural bank. The proposition will doubtless recall certain Populist financial schemes of the last decade, but times are changing, and Secretary Taft strongly urges Congress to heed the cry of the Philippine granger for cheaper money.

Secretary Taft reports that the troublesome question of the ownership of the land and buildings occupied by the Catholic Church under the Spanish regimen has been settled in the Supreme Court of the islands, which has unanimously decided that "the title to the churches and convents used and occupied by the Roman Catholic Church before the change of sovereignty vested in that church, and of course was not divested by the treaty of Paris." Thus the last bond connecting church and state in the Philippines has been severed and a fruitful cause of religious controversy removed forever.

While Mr. Root was talking about those States that maintain vicious laws, designedly enacted for the purpose of fostering trusts and oppressive monopolies, New Jersey tried to look just as unconcerned as possible.

One Obstacle to Currency Reform.

In the notable address delivered by Jacob H. Schiff, in Chicago, a few days ago, that eminent financier spoke of the popular distrust of propositions for the improvement of our currency system—a distrust grounded partly on belief that the banks are issuing a new source of profit through the issue of more bank notes, and partly on conviction that the frequent recurrence of monetary stringency from which relief is desired is merely a local matter, even if it is directly brought about by the banks themselves for selfish purposes.

When several members of the American Bankers' Association appeared before the House Committee on Banking the other day, they found it difficult to convince the members of the committee that high money rates in New York City were not a purely local phenomenon, without any connection with monetary conditions elsewhere. The House committee doubtless had in mind the allegations made only a short time before by Mr. Schiff before the New York Chamber of Commerce that a certain bank in that city had manipulated the money market by calling in loans in the morning, thereby creating an artificial scarcity of credit, for the purpose of making loans at a higher rate in the afternoon. Similar charges against other banks are current in Wall street, and there is beginning to be loud demand for reform in the methods of loaning on call, methods which Mr. Schiff had no hesitation in denouncing as "barbarous."

As long as there is ground for suspicion that monetary stringency and accompanying high rates for money on call are artificial and local, it will continue to be difficult to convince the ordinary citizen of the necessity for currency reform. He will be apt to think that reform should begin at home, and that metropolitan credit operations are reduced to some sort of system short of the "barbarous" and hardly reasonable to ask the government to interfere. We do not wholly agree with this view, but it is one that explains the slowness of the country to respond to appeals for financial reform emanating from Wall street, and it should be taken to heart by conscientious and honorable bankers in the metropolitan financial district.

One of the Georgia counties is rejoicing over the fact that it has held a fair and wound up with a handsome surplus instead of the regulation deficit.

An Indiana man stole a mile and a half of copper wire charged with 250 volts of electricity. The man who stole the red-hot stove must yield up the belt.

A hard-headed San Francisco judge stubbornly persisted in denying Mayor Schmitz's "triumphant vindication" by refusing to sustain demerits and technical pleas put forward for the purpose of throwing the indictments out of court.

It also adds to the gravity of nations to note the emphatic and "probably" which he tried to shorten to "probly." He will probably recover, although he has three doctors and a trained nurse. There were many other instances of a lack of harmony in the meeting, but was remarkable that, though they left "out of whiskey," it went down peaceably.

Mr. Roosevelt has consented to serve another term as honorary president of the American Olympic games committee. This ought to bring some comfort to Gen. Grosvenor's heart.

A Berlin professor says thoughts may be photographed. It would be very difficult to recognize some of our friends by their thought pictures, however.

It has been statistically demonstrated that there will be one Japanese for every five hundred Americans, and that in five years hence, let us, then, pass up the problem for a while.

Unless Mr. Bryan desires to be considered a moonshiner and an old fogie, he should hurry and get his head shaved, and abroad and come home still more radical than ever. Things are coming pretty swift these days.

Having displayed an ability to keep 3,000 servants in his employ, the Emperor of Germany thinks nothing of a little thing like firing the Reichstag.

A Kansas man has invented a money-counting machine. "The only way to take the time to count it for themselves in Kansas, with crops and things as they are."

People are said to live longer in Bulgaria than anywhere else on earth. Everything seems to be against the man who has to live in Bulgaria.

Emperor William is also a handy man with his big stick.

Here comes Mr. Hughes and further proves that he is "not a politician" by displaying a hearty willingness to keep his ante-election promises.

The disposition to tax inheritances rather than incomes lifts a burden of weight from the soul of the press agent. Stage fortunes do not matter after the possessors are dead and gone.

Andrew Carnegie's statement that the public has always been a partner in his business transactions shows what frightful things sometimes happen to a silent partner.

Congressman Fred Landis says the way that his defeat was due to the "friendship of Congressman Longworth" is "an insult to the intelligence of his constituents." The inference is, of course, that his constituents had intelligence enough to defeat him, even without Mr. Longworth's assistance.

The most unfortunate youngster coming under our notice for many a day is an Augusta (Ga.) boy whose birthday comes on Christmas.

A LAY SERMON.

By A LAYMAN.

The King of France, with forty thousand men, was to be the king of the kings of the world.

It will be observed that the author of the text speaks of the King of France, meaning, of course, some particular king, but he does not give us his name, or the date when he reigned. We do not know if it was Charles V (1373), sometimes called the Wise, who in his first battle at Poitiers deserted his colors, and toward the end of his reign erected the Bastille. We do not know if it was Charles VI, who was defeated at Agincourt by Henry V of England; or any of the kings of that name. Nor do we know if it was Louis IX, who had Flanders restored to France, and died of poison; or Louis IX, who was canonized a saint, or any other of the kings of that name. We are only informed that the subject of the text was "the King of France."

We are told, however, distinctly that he marched with forty thousand men. The lesson to be learned from this text is, that all men, kings, princes, presidents, governors, soldiers, and all others who ever inhabited or ever will inhabit this earth, have marched up the hill of life, or are now doing so, and will march down again. Each one, without regard to his character or position in life, has in his hand the top of the hill, which he desires to reach. On that hill are supposed to rest fame, riches, contentment, and happiness. There are many roads and paths leading to the top, which are hused by rough grounds, deep rivers, huge stones, and every kind of heat and cold, and storms and tempests. Each one struggles to be first, and many, with no regard for those who have fallen by the way, rush madly over them, intent only on the summit. Those who find fame or riches are frequently surprised by their findings, and disappointed at the measure of their success, and the time comes when they must, in company with their less successful colleagues, spend our lives when we have descended to the foot of the inevitable hill we can feel that we have endeavored in our lives not to offend our Maker, and that we could to the happiness of our fellow-men.

EXTRAVAGANT OWNERSHIP.

Australian Government Omnibuses Operated at a Heavy Loss.

C. Arthur Williams, in the World Today.

One of the most remarkable instances of extravagance in the administration of government-owned utilities in Australia was in connection with the recent purchase of motor omnibuses for use as adjuncts to the tram service. One of the railway commissioners returned from a trip to England impressed with the idea that it would be an excellent plan to bring out several of the vehicles and put them in service in Sydney. He convinced his colleagues of the merits of the scheme, as he saw them, but the train officials protested against the proposed purchase, and asserted that motor omnibuses could not be used in the city streets, because of how satisfactory they had been shown to be in England. In the face of their opposition, however, the commissioners imported four chassis, the bodies being built in the local shops. Two of the vehicles were delivered on December 4, 1905, to April 7, 1906, and were then withdrawn. The other two were in service from April 23, 1906, to May 29 of the same year, when they were withdrawn.

The cost of the omnibuses was \$25,538 and the total expense of their operation during the brief periods indicated was \$9,648, making a grand total expenditure of \$35,186. The total revenue was exactly \$557, or \$2,473.

The Spelling Bee at Billville.

From the Atlanta Constitution.

"We regret to report," says the Billville Banner, "that the Spelling Bee, as an organization, is about to die. It died game, but it died all over. And it was all on account of the new advanced speller coming in contact with the old. When they tackled the word 'thru,' one of the school members spelt it like Mr. Carnegie does, and gave him and President Roosevelt a severe talking, whereupon he was accused of being a Republican agitator who had had no place in a Democratic spelling bee. He went through—but it was by way of the disturbance with the word 'probly,' which he tried to shorten to 'probly.' He will probably recover, although he has three doctors and a trained nurse. There were many other instances of a lack of harmony in the meeting, but was remarkable that, though they left 'out of whiskey,' it went down peaceably."

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CAPITOL GOSSIP.

Prospective Georgia Vacancy.

With the expiration of the Fifty-ninth Congress on March 4, Senator Bacon's second term will end, and from that date until the Georgia legislature meets at Atlanta, in June, that State will be represented on the Senate roll call by only one name, unless, pending the interval, Gov. Terrell appoints Mr. Bacon or somebody else to fill the vacancy. Senator Bacon was unanimously nominated by the Georgia Democrats in their primary election last summer, but under the peculiar arrangements now existing in this State the legislature has been instructed to return him to the Senate to meet not until June. At that time Gov.-elect Hoke Smith also will be inducted into office. Heretofore the Georgia legislature has met in October, and usually elected United States Senators in November. Mr. Bacon's first election occurred in the last named month. There is, of course, no doubt whatever of his re-election by the unanimous vote of the Democrats in the legislature, but news from Georgia indicates a bare possibility of Gov. Terrell giving the temporary appointment to somebody else, as a compliment and without any intent to reflect upon Senator Bacon. A question also has been raised in Georgia as to the authority of Gov. Terrell to fill the short vacancy at all, and the politicians of that State are getting worked up over this question. Senator Bacon is in line for promotion to the floor leadership of the Democrats to succeed the late Arthur Pue Gorman. It is understood that he does not want the responsibility of that position.

Mr. Slayden Misrepresented.

The attitude of Representative Slayden, of Texas, on the centralization question has been distorted by the newspapers unintentionally. He has been quoted as approving the bold and radical stand recently assumed by Secretary Root, when he insisted that just the opposite is his position. "What I tried to say to the newspapers when applied to for an interview on this vitally interesting subject," said Mr. Slayden yesterday, "was that in his New York speech Secretary Root had performed a service of great public value by the warning he gave of the rapid drift of our government into centralization. I abhor the centralization that is preached and practiced by his party, but I recognize that because the State governments have failed signally in their duties all the powers of our governments are being centralized here in Washington. I hope Mr. Root's speech will have the effect of arousing the people to the true condition of things, to the end that they may strengthen their State governments so that the States will perform the functions the builders of this nation imposed upon them. Until that is done we may expect the national government to aggrandize and exercise the powers that belong to the States. I recognize as well as anybody does that the national quarantine law, which was demanded by the South, is a long step toward centralization; but the State governments failed to afford the people of the States involved the necessary protection, and there was nothing to do but apply to the government for protection for the protection we have secured."

Mr. Root's State Papers.

Great lawyer and successful diplomat that Elihu Root is recognized as being, it is a fact little known—that the verbiage of the diplomatic papers bearing his name is not his own. A close friend of his in the Senate commented upon this yesterday as an interesting circumstance, and pointed out the fact that Mr. Root's long experience at the bar accounts for his refusal to compose the important papers which he has to sign as Secretary of State. As a lawyer of large practice he acquired the habit of directness and incisiveness, which is ill suited to the ways and customs of diplomacy. Realizing this fully, it was not long after Mr. Root assumed the duties of Secretary of State that he discovered that the safest course for him to pursue would be to have one of his assistants clothe in the formal and stilted language of diplomacy every communication of importance he had to make to a foreign power. Accordingly, he had Assistant Secretary Adey, who has been longer in the State Department than any other high official there, compose these communications. Mr. Root blocks them out, giving clearly, distinctly, and briefly his ideas, and then Adey turns over to Mr. Root, who produces a paper that conforms most minutely to all of the requirements of diplomatic forms and customs, and which at the same time conveys accurately the meaning and intent of Mr. Root.

Vernon a Full-Blond.

Congressmen are remarking upon the curious circumstance that there is now a full-blond negro in the person of Hon. W. T. Vernon, of Kansas, recently confirmed by the Senate as Register of the Treasury.

Vernon succeeded Judson Lyon, of Georgia. Lyon is copper-colored. Vernon is black, and has none but African blood in his veins. Several negroes have held office since the time of Vernon, but none of them was as black as he. Vernon was prominent for years in the Republican politics of Kansas, and his selection for Register of the Treasury is a new record made by President Roosevelt before the Senators from that State were consulted. A pretty stiff fight was made on his confirmation, under the leadership of Senator Turner, of Indiana, and up to that point the majority of the Senate that the charges against Vernon were not true. Vernon spends a good deal of his time at the Capitol, and seems immensely interested in the proceedings of Congress. It is said that he has an ambition to serve in the House, and that he may make a race for that position when his term as Register of the Treasury expires. Kansas has never had a negro in the Senate, though the negro vote in that State is considerable and just about represents the Republican majority under normal political conditions. He is stout and stocky, and reputed to be an orator of first-rate ability. He is a school-teacher by profession.

Two Judicial Chams.

Every week-day afternoon when the Supreme Court of the United States holds a session in its cozy little room at the Capitol and adjourns, Associate Justice Edward Douglas White and Associate Justice Oliver Wendell Holmes are the first members of the august tribunal to leave the building. Mr. Justice White, a Louisiana Democrat of the old school, is stout and robust. Mr. Justice Holmes, a Massachusetts Republican of the old school, is lank and attenuated. The judicial legs "keep step" as their owners swing along side by side down the long walk from the west front of the Capitol to the Avenue, and up that splendid thoroughfare they stride at a gait which many a younger man has tried and failed to maintain. Their gesticulations indicate that they are discussing some abstract question of law, or perhaps metaphysics, and they keep up an animated conversation all the way to their homes. They usually are so engrossed in each other's talk that neither looks to the right nor the left on their long walk homeward, and thus few persons have a chance to salute them. But whenever another pedestrian does have the good fortune to catch the eye of either, both give a profound bow and a military salute which leaves no doubt in the army more than forty years ago, when they were shooting at each other, Mr. Justice Holmes from the Union side and Mr. Justice White from the Confederate side. It is said that sometimes they fight their battles over again as they walk from the Supreme Court chambers to their homes. No two members of the court are as chummy as these two members.

Undoubtedly.

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